A FRVITful Sermon, preached at Occham, in the County of *Rutland*, the Second of *Nouember*. 1583.

By *Thomas Gybson*.

PROVERB. 29. 8.

¶ VVhere there is no Vision, the people decay.



AT LONDON;

Printed by Robert Walde-grane dwelling without Temple-Barre.



¶ TO THE RIGHT HOnorable Lord, FRANCES, Earle *of BEDFORD, and one of her* Maiesties most honourable priuy Councell, Knight of the Noble order of the Garter; VVith the right honourable, Sir VValter MILDMAY Knight, Chauncellour of the Queenes Maiesties Court of Exchequer, and of her highnesse most honourable priuie Counsell: Grace, Mercy, and peace be multiplied from God our heauenly father, and from our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ.

THE blessed & holy Euangelist Saint *Luke*, (Right honorable) pening & publishing the heauenly story and blessed Gospell of Iesus Christ, doth also dedicate the same to one *Theophilus*, a noble & famous man, of singular credite and auethoritie. The reason and

cause that moued him thereto, is because in those times, the purenesse of the Gospel was hindered, and persecuted, wherby many errours began to be spread and allowed: and therefore in great wisedome it pleased the holye Ghost, not onely to write a faithfull, sure, and perfect story: but also to offer and present the custodie and defence of the same, to one of Religion and power. The very same cause partly, hath mooued me at this time, to be so bold as to offer & dedicate this poore and simple testimonie of my trauaile to your Honours. For although I doe confesse, wee liue vnder a Gratious Prince (whome the Lorde long continue to hys glory, to the shame and confusion of his enemies, and to the daily profit of his Church) although

(Isay)

(I ſay) we liue in ſo peaceable, happie, and gratious a time, vnder the flouriſhing ſtate of the Goſpell: yet truely the deareſt Children of God, and the ſinceritie of religion, is ſubiect to bitter perſecution. Theſe words at the firſt may ſeeme very greeuous, hard and haynous, and yet they are moſte certaine and true. The holy Apoſtle S. Paule, writing to the *Galatians.* 4. 29. ſpeaketh on this maner: *As hee that was borne after the fleſh, perſecuted him that was borne after the ſpirite:* euen ſo is it now: hee ſpeaketh of *Iſmael* and *Iſaac*, and yet we do not read in the ſcripture of any perſecution betweene them, neyther did *Iſmael* perſecute his brother *Iſaac*, with hand or ſword, but that which is worſe, proudly and arrogantly, he rayſed himſelfe againſt him, mocking him, and as it were,

treading

treading vnder feete the promiſe of God. And this dealing by the Apoſtle is called a perſecution, & in deede there is not any perſecution more greeuous to the Children of God then this. Now who doth not dayly ſee, that the beſt Chriſtians, and the pureneſſe of religion are greatly perſecuted, by Papiſtes, Atheiſts, and Hipocrites as *Iſaac* was by his brother *Iſmaell*. And of all matters of religion, I thinke there is ſcarce anie in theſe dayes more generally hated of ſuch kind of men, thē that, which is moſte altogether, and almoſt onely handled in this ſimple ſermon. For theſe and ſuch like men, many of them can bee content with a common ordinary profeſſion, to heare Mattins and Euenſong, and ſometimes a ſermon, by ſuch men as they like of, but that

there

there ſhoulde be any continuall courſe of the pure preaching of the word of God, they can in no caſe allow or like of. This I ſay, is hated, reiected and perſecuted ſo far as may be, of the greater ſort, and therefore not without cauſe haue I attempted to dedicate this my laboure, to your honours as ſpeciall patrons, and defenders of the Lords cauſe, and tried friends and fauourers of God and hys trueth. But yet this attempt may ſeeme very raſhe and needleſſe: For who am I, that I ſhoulde take vpon me to ſet forth and to publiſh any thing? The vnworthieſt I confeſſe of many hundreths, and the vnableſt of many thouſandes, and yet ſeeing many things more ſimple, leſſe needefull and profitable, are not onely ſuffered, but allowed to come abroad: I am

not altogether discouraged: neyther hath any man iust cause to accuse me in this my simple enterprise. I knowe these be dayes of knowledge and learning, there be greater store of famous and learned diuines in our land (whome I beseeche the Lord to blesse, that they may assiste their weake brethren, in the defence of this, and suche good causes,) and yet the two mites of the poore widowe cast into the treasury, amongst the great giftes of the wealthie, are not to be refused. I knowe your Honours be dayly hearers of famous and learned men, both in your houses and abroad: you are acquainted with the sermons of profound and deepe diuines, and suche as are mightie in the scriptures: notwithstanding hauing in my selfe sufficient triall and experience

rienee of your honours moſt curteous, humble, and fauourable dealing towardes me, and alſo of ſome liking of my ſimple & poore trauelles in preaching heretofore: I am not aſhamed or afrayd after ſuch triall and proofe, to offer this ſo ſmal & ſimple a thing vnto your honours. The great neceſſitie of the matter I deale withall, the care of Gods glory, the zeale of hys houſe, the benefit that his church may haue by it, hath eſpecially mooued me that it ſhuld be publiſhed and come abroad. Let not therefore hipocrites be too raſh in iudging, the Lord the ſearcher of the heartes and reines, knoweth my purpoſe & affection, in preaching and publiſhing this matter. The cauſe that hath mooued me to preſent it to your Honours, rather then to other, is the long

proofe

proofe and acquaintance of your honourable courteſies, and frendly good will towardes me, which for my part, I am neuer able to requite, for the which I thinke my ſelfe as long as breathe is in me, moſte bound & indebted to your Honours. And here I offer this poore fruite of my trauell, as ſome teſtimonie of good wil and thankfulneſſe. And whereas wee are woont commonly to offer & preſent to our deareſt friendes, ſome giftes, as tokens of good will, or els of ſpeciall duetie: Amongeſt many great and pretious preſents which are no doubt giuen & preſented to your honours, I alſo offer this ſimple mite, and yet I hope more pleaſaunt and acceptable to the receiuers, then thouſandes of golde or ſiluer, or any earthly thing whatſoeuer. And in deede

can

can there be anye matter more ſweete and pleaſaunt, to the chiefe Patrones and defenders of the godly preachers, and the word of God, then to heare of the neceſſitie, profite, and excellencie of preaching: which things are ſette foorth plainly and largely in this little ſermon. For howſoeuer many men hate and abhorre this matter, and can in no wiſe diſgeſt it: yet your honours zeale, courage, liking, good will and countenaunce, to this and other good cauſes, is commonly knowne and ſpread abroad. A further reaſon why I publiſh this ſermon, is, becauſe there is ſome matter in it, for the which I haue bene in the country where I dwell, openly ſlaundered and euill ſpoken of, & therefore to cleare my ſelfe from ſuch falſe reportes, to ſatisfie my friendes

friendes which are readie to aunſwere in my cauſe: to let the enemies knowe, I haue ſpoken nothing whereof I am aſhamed, but dare put it to the witneſſing and teſtimonie of the Chriſtiã reader: and alſo to reſolue more fully, the weaker ſort, in ſuch thinges as at the firſt ſeeme ſtraunge and abſurde. For theſe and ſuch like cauſes, I ſay, I am content and willing that this my trauel come to light: although the whole or moſt part of this ſermon is vnſauorie and vnpleaſaunt to the greater ſort, and ſpecially to the ignoraunt people, to the hipocrite, to the idoll or dumbe miniſter: yet this is that, which chiefly miſliketh and greueth them: becauſe, both in the place where I preached this Sermon, and alſo elſe-where, I ſayd & affirmed, that the miniſter which

which preacheth not, & hath not those giftes which the Lorde requireth in his Ministers, that such a one is no minister, approoued of God, neyther hath anie right and authoritie from the Lorde, to minister his sacramentes. Which matter, how straunge and absurde soeuer it seeme to ignorant and carnall men: yet I hope it is here sufficiently confirmed by authoritie and examples of the holye scripture. I could alleadge further, the allowance and iudgement of moste famous and pure Diuines, and such as are generally receiued and allowed of all true Christians. Maister IOHN CALVIN, about the latter end of his Catechisme, which is allowed by her Maiesties authoritie, sayth in playne wordes, that the ministration of the sacraments belongeth

to them, who haue the charge to preach openly in the Church. For the preaching of Gods word, and the ministration of the sacramẽts, be thinges ioyntly belonging to one kinde of office: these be hys very wordes which are as playne as may be: M. RODOLPHVS GVALTER in his 118. Homely vpon MARKE, speaking of the institution of the Lordes supper, and of the right order in ministring that sacrament, amongst other thinges sayth on this maner. *Peccant qui cœnam absq; verbi predicatione peragunt, adeóq; illam huic præferunt, quasi vel ad dei cultum, vel ad salutem plus conferat, quam verbum, cum tamen huius maiorem, quam sacramentorum rationem habuerunt Christus & Apostoli.* They sinne agaynst the institution of Christ, which doe minister the supper without preaching of the word, and so preferre the sacra-

ment

crament before preaching: as though that auayled more to ſaluation & ſeruice of God, then the word preached: wheras notwithſtanding, both Chriſt & the Apoſtles eſtemed more the preaching of the word, then the Sacrament. Theſe are his wordes. I might alleadge many other teſtimonies for this cauſe, not onely from the moſt worthy, godly, & learned diuines, both old and new of other nations: but alſo frō famous martirs & Biſhops in this our land, in their ſermons and writinges, publiſhed & priuiledged by authority. I hope then there is no cauſe, why this doctrine ſhould not receiue a fauourable intertainment & allowance, as of your honours, ſo of al faithfull chriſtians, hauing ſuch warrant from ſo pure & learned men, and from the teſtimony

of

of the holy word. Whatsoeuer I spake in deliuering and vttering this sermō, I haue here set it down (so neere as I coulde remember) both in forme and matter. To cōclude, I most heartily desire in the Lord, the christian reader, and especially your honors, to accept this my poore trauel. I am bold to ioyn you both in one, not onely because the Lorde hath ioyned you togither, in the bōd of frendship, and in a care of my good estate: but also, that which is greatest of all, in a zeale of Gods glory and furtheraunce of his religion. Now the very God of peace, sanctify you throughout: And I pray God that your whole spirites and soules, and bodies, may be kept blameless vnto the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. Amen.

Your honours in the Lord:

THOMAS GIBSON.

Hearken with feare and reuerence to the worde of the Lorde, written by the holy Apoſtle S. Paule, in his firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians.

Chap. 9. verſe. 16.

Woe be to me, if I preach not the Goſpell.

OUR Lord and Sauiour Jeſus Chriſt, in the 17. chapter of the bleſſed Euãgeliſt *Luke* amongeſt many other excellent thinges, vttereth and propoundeth this parable, *Who is it of you, that hauing a ſeruaunt plowing or feeding cattell, would ſay vnto him by and by when he wer come from the fielde, Goe and ſit downe at table. &c.* And afterwardes in the tenth verſe applieth it on this maner. *So likewiſe ye, when ye haue done all thoſe thinges which are commaunded you. ſay, we are vnprofitable ſeruaunts. we haue done that which* Luke. 17. 7. 8. 2.

was our duety to doe. The holy Apostle and seruaunt of Christ in this place, auoucheth and confesseth in himselfe, the saying of his maister to be moste true. For although amongest manye good workes, there is not a more excellent or better worke, then the preaching of the word of God (which was done moste purely, effectually, and diligently by the Apostle) yet hee is so farre from accounting it meritorious, that hee sayth, a necessitie is layd vpon him, that duetie bindeth him to doe it. In the former verses from the beginning of this chapter. Saint Paule sheweth, and that with diligence and large copie of wordes, that beeing amongest the Corinthians, he was content to giue place to his owne right, to forbeare that which hee might lawfully doe, to take no maintenaunce at all from them, least he should giue occasion of cauilling to the false Apostles: as though hee vnder the pretence of the calling of an Apostle, should seeme to seeke his owne gayne and lucre. Amongest other thinges hee

hath

hath sayde, and that in the former verse: *It were better for me to dye then that anie man shoulde make my reioysing in vaine.* The which wordes may seeme to proceede and flowe from an ambitious and vaineglorious spirite. And therefore it myght bee sayde, What now Paule? What needes all this? Thou art wont to glory in Christ alone, and doest thou now glory in thine owne doinges? To suche a question or objection the Apostle aunswereth qualifying his former speeche, as if hee should say: Although it be an excellent worke to preache the Gospell, and that freely, yet take not my wordes so, as though I repose anye merite of saluation in this worke, for I am called to it, and bound to it, by ducty and commaundement from my maister Christ. And if I doe it not, I provoke and procure the anger of God, and the sentence of his curse and condemnation on me.

Woe bee to mee if I preach not the Gospell. Of these wordes, being but a part of the verse, I haue taken vpon mee to

speake at this time. From whence I meane by Gods grace to speake of these three pointes. First I will gather some description of preaching, that you may know what it is. Secondly, I meane to proove the necessitie of preaching, and that euery minister is bound to preach.

Thirdly, I will shewe what they ought to preache. The first point, as in many other places, so here it is named, but not fully set down what it is, but in other places wee may easily gather what it is. The second is here named and approoued. For Saint Paule beeing a minister, and saying: *Woe be vnto me if I preach not the Gospell*, doth plainly affirme as much. The third is here set downe most plainly, the matter that we must preach of, namely the Gospell.

As touching the first, let vs see how the scripture speaketh of it, as it is particularly and specially applyed to the publicke office of the minister, otherwise I knowe this worde preaching, to haue a further and more generall

nerall signification. But I speake of it, as Christ and the Apostles doe, applying it to the ministers. S. Paule sayth, *He that prophecieth, speaketh vnto men to edifying, to exhortation and to comfort.* 1.Cor.14.3. The same Apostle charging Timothy, and in him euery minister, to preache the word, addeth immediately, *Improoue, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine.* 2.Tim.4.2. The blessed Apostle Peter, as hee receiued of his maister a charge to feede his flocke, so he exhorteth all other to doe the same. Iohn.21.15. 1.Pet.5.2.

The holy Euangelist Luke sayeth, that Christ taught or preached in Nazareth. Hee first read, then shutte the booke, afterward hee expounded that scripture which he read: and so applied it to the hearers. By these and such like places, we may gather, that preaching properly as we speake of it, is an exposition and application of the scriptures, by the liuely voyce of the minister, to the edifying of the people: whereby it may easily appeare that reading is not preaching, nor yet sufficient in a minister approoued of God. Luke 4.16.

1.Tim.3.2. Saint paul wil haue hym apt to teache,

Mala.2.7. The Prophet Malachy affirmeth, that the Prieſtes lippes muſt preſerue knowledge. Chriſt after reading ſhut the booke and expounded, and yet ſome are not aſhamed to count ſimple reading ſufficient: ſaying, it will ſerue the turne, and there may bee as muche good done by it as by preaching. As for reading wee ſpeake not againſte it, we diſalowe it not, but account it a holy, lawfull, neceſſarye, and profitable meane, whereby great good and benefite is wrought to the Churche of God: but yet it doth not followe that it is ſufficient in a Miniſter, that it will ſerue ſimplye of it ſelfe in the publique congregation. The Lorde hath ſet downe an other order, and requireth greater thinges at the handes of his ſpeciall ſeruauntes. But this matter ſhall appeare more plaine in the wordes folowing: For my purpoſe in this part is, onely to ſhewe you by ſome circumſtaunces and deſcripcions what preaching is, and that reading is not preaching, or at leaſt that kinde of

prea-

preaching whiche the Lorde requireth in his Miniſters, as maye appeare by comparing them together, and by vſing ſome apt ſimylitudes for the explanation of this matter. The ſmell or ſight of meate doth good to the hungrye man, but it will not feede hym, excepte hee take of it: So by reading, men maye haue ſome ſmell of relygion, but they ſhall neuer throughlie taſte of it, without preaching, and therefore it is called a feedyng, as we heard before, and Preachers are counted Paſtours and feeders. Againe, meate that is rawe and fatte, maye bee called good, but it is not to bee eaten before it bee made redye and dreſſed: ſo are the Scriptures reade, good, holie, and pure, but not ſufficient foode, for the people, without preaching. Agayne bare reading is as though one ſhould caſt a whole loafe, before them which want ſtrength to cutte it, Preaching is a cutting and deuiding of the breade of lyfe, that euerye one may haue his ſeuerall portion. Againe bare reading without preachinge, is

1. Tim. 2. 15.

euen as the husbandman shoulde cast whole strikes and bushelles of Corne, on his land together on heapes, not
Math.13. scattering of it: preaching is a spreading and a sowing of the seed. Againe bare reading is, as though the Fisher shoulde shuffle his nets on heapes, not opening them: Preaching is a wise opening, laying and handling of the Nette.

Bare reading is as one shoulde offer good treasures, and yet suche as were hid, shut vp and fast locked, and could not be come by: Preaching is an opening of the treasures, to the ioye of Gods Children. Reading is lyke to fire couered with Ashes, whiche doeth smally profite them that stand by it: Preaching is an opening and discouering of the fire. Let vs consider one example amongest many, for the further explaning of this matter. The
Act.8.27. Chamberlaine that noble Treasurer of Aethiopia, going to Hierusalem, to worshippe God, as hee went read the Scriptures: if reading woulde haue serued his turne, Philip needed not to

haue

haue come to him, but hee vnderstoode not before he had a guide: hee was not conuerted, neyther had hee fayth sufficient to saluation, before hee heard the preaching of the worde, whiche in deede is that especiall, effectuall, blessed and excellent ordinarye meane of fayth, as it appeareth more playnly and fully in the next part of oure text.

Whiche beeing rightly waighed, confirmeth the great necessitie of preachyng, and prooueth that euery minister ought to preache. *Woe bee to me if I preache not the Gospell.* And why so? because I am called to it, because I am a minister, because the Lorde requireth [illegible] me. Although Saincte Paule and the other Apostles had priuiledges and prerogatiues, whiche wee haue not: although wee haue not fully so large a commission, as hee and they hadde: although they did many thinges, which wee neyther may, nor can doe: yet as touchyng the office of preachyng, it appertayneth as well to vs, as to them. And for the further

proofe

proofe of this matter I will rehearse some arguments which before I haue vsed in this place, adding diuers others to them.

1 It is the commaundement of Christe and the holye Apostles, therefore necessarye. Christe sayd to his Apostles, *Goe preache the Gospell*. The which commaundement, in this behalfe belongeth to all the Ministers of God. Saynt Paule strayghtly chargeth the Ministers of Ephesus. *Take heede vnto your selues, and to all the flocke, whereof the holye Ghost hath made you ouerseers, to feede the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his owne blood.* And most waightilie of all, he requireth it in the place alredy alleadged. He leaueth it not as a thing indifferent, that maye bee done or vndone, but speaketh with a wonderfull and mightie protestation, he ioyneth the Scripture and preaching togeather. For hauing before in the former Chappiter, set forth the great profit of the Scriptures, straight waye bee necessarylye addeth thys forcible exhortation, *I charge thee there-*

Mar. 16.15.

Act. 20.28.

2. Tim. 4.1.

therefore before God, and before the Lord Iesus Christ, which shall iudge the quicke and the dead at his appearing, and in his kingdome: preach the worde, be instant, in season and out of season, improoue, rebuke, exhort.

2 It is an argument and token of the loue the Minister oweth vnto Christ and to the people, as it appeareth, Iohn. 21. 15. where Iesus Christ sayth to Peter after his resurrection. *Simon sonne of Iona, louest thou me more then these? He sayde vnto him, yea Lord, thou knowest that I loue thee: he sayde to him, feed my Lambes.* He sayd vnto him the second time. *Simon the sonne of Iona, louest thou me? He sayd vnto him, yea Lorde, thou knowest that I loue thee: hee sayd vnto him, feed my sheep.* Christ said to him the thirde time. *Simon the sonne of Iona, louest thou me? Peter was sory because he sayde to him the third time, louest thou me, & said vnto him, Lord thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I loue thee. Iesus sayd vnto him: feed my sheep.* Whereby it is euident, that those which feede not loue not Christe: Seeing Iohn. 21. 15. 16. 17.

ing then that feeding or preaching, is so plaine a token of the loue that the minister oweth to Christ: it is moste necessarily required, if any doe preach and yet not vppon this loue, they haue their condemnation.

3 The Churche of God is begunne and grounded, by the preaching of the
Rom.10.17. worde: and therefore necessarie. Paule sayth, *Fayth commeth by the worde preached.*

Againe, hee counteth hys preaching
1.Cor.3.6. amongest the Corinthians, a planting of them in faith and religion. S. Peter
1.Pet.1.23. sayth: *We are borne a new, not of mortall seed, but of immortall, by the word of God, who liueth and endureth for euer.* And presently addeth. *This is the word which is preached among you.*

4 By preaching, the Church of God
1.Cor.3.1. Heb.5.12.& 6.1. is not onely begunne, but also amplified, builded and enlarged. It will not onely make vs Babes in Christ, but strong and Spirituall men. It hath not onely milke for the weake, but strong meate for them, that are at age. By it we are brought not one-

ly

lye to the beginning of Christe, and firste rudimentes of Christian Religion, but also wee are leede forwarde vnto perfection. The holye Apostle affirmeth this, when as hee sayeth, that *Iesus gaue some to be Apostles, and Prophettes, and some Euangelistes, and some Pastours and Teachers, for the gathering of Saincles, for the worke of the Ministerie, and for the edification of the bodie of Christ vnto a perfect man, and vnto the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ.* Ephe. 4.11. 12.13.

5 The Church of God begunne and brought to that perfection whiche can be in earth, is also stayed, strengthened, vpholden and preserued, by the preaching of the worde, agaynst sinne and errour. And therefore for these causes also, the preaching of the word is moste necessary, yea and that dayly and continually, bicause some are weake, and haue neede of dayly strengthning, some fall into errours, and some into greeuous sinnes, from the whiche they are to bee drawne out by the effectuall preaching of the word.

worde. This doth the holye Apostle
2.Tim.3 16. confirme whereas hee sayth, that *The whole Scripture is profitable to teache, to improoue, to corect, and to instruct in righteousnesse, that the man of God may be absolute, being made perfect vnto all good workes,*

6 Agayne to the pure preaching of the worde, the Lorde hath promised a blessing, the Minister shalbee blessed,
Dan.12.3. the people also blessed thorough it: *They that bee wise* sayth Daniell, *shall shine as the brightnesse of the firmament: And they that tourne many vnto righteousnesse shall shine as the starres for euer and euer. The wise and faythfull steward,*
Mat,24.25 *that giueth meate to the housholde in due season, when his master commeth he shall be blessed and made partaker of exceeding*
1.Tim. 4.16. *ioy & glory. Take heed* (saith the apostle) *to thy selfe, and to learning: continue therein, for in dooing this, thou shalt both saue thy selfe, and them that heare thee.* God
Ionas.3.4. so blessed the preaching of his Seruaunt Ionas, that thorough it the Niniuites beleeued God, humbled themselues and forsooke their former wic-

ked

ked wayes. At one preaching of Peter there were wonne to the Lorde about three thousande soules. Thus doth the Lorde blesse his owne order, the Minister by pure and saythfull preaching, dischargeth his owne soule, obtayneth peace in conscience, and so is blessed in this life, but shall bee farre more blessed in the life to come, when hee hath finished hys course, he shall receiue an incorruptible crown of glorye. The people also by this meanes are many wayes blessed, they receiue knowledge, sayth, and saluation: their eies are opened, they are turned from darkenesse to light, and from the power of Sathan vnto God. All these greate and notable blessinges, do ensue the preaching of the worde, and therefore required most necessarylie in euery minister. Act.2.41. Act.26.18.

7 On the other side, without this, both the Minister and the people are accursed, the bloud of the people shal bee required at his handes, because he hath not as a saythfull watche-man, forewarned them of daunger, and Eze.3.17.

yet

yet they shall dye in theyr own sinnes.

The Lorde complayneth by hys Prophet Hosea, saying, *My people are destroyed for lacke of knowledge, because thou hast refused knowledge, I will also refuse thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me.* To this agreeth our Sauiour Christ: *If the salt haue lost his saltinesse, it is good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be troden vnder foote of men.* And if these ministers whiche sometimes haue hadde salt in them, zeale, and knowledge to season the people, and by negligence and carelesnesse, decay and loose it: If these I say be worthy to be cast out, howe miserable and cursed are they whiche neuer had, nor yet haue anye salt in them. It must needes bee fulfilled of them which our Sauiour speaketh in an other place: *They be blinde leaders of the blinde, and if the blinde lead the blinde, both shall fall into the ditche,* that is, both the ignorannt minister, and the ignorannt people shall perishe. And in an other place it is sayd, *Cast that vnprofitable seruannt into vtter darckenesse, there*

Hosea.4.6.

Mat.5.13.

Mat.15.14.

Mat.25.30.

there shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth. And here it is said, *Woe be to me if I preach not the Gospell,*

Seeing then that euery way there hangeth so manye greeuous curses, both vpon the minister and people, where the worde is not preached, it is most requisite and necessarye, that euerye minister looke to this, euen as hee will escape the fearefull and heauie curse of God.

8 Moreouer the chiefe ende and vse, why the Scriptures were written, doth require preaching. They are left for our comfort, instruction, and edifying. But we are most comforted, instructed, and edified, if they be opened and applied vnto vs, and therefore most necessarye that they be so vsed. Rom.15.4. 1.Cor.14.

9 Also the corruption and dulnesse of our nature, requyreth the same. We are dull, ignoraunt, and careless: wee please our selues in our owne sinnes, the Deuill goeth about continually to deuour vs, and therefore we haue neede to haue con-

1.Cor. 2.14. tinuall preaching of the worde. The naturall man perceaueth not the
2.Sam.12. thinges that are of Gods spirite. Dauid, after he had sinned, continued in his sinne, vntill the Prophet reproued him for it, yea, and woulde not take it to him self, although Nathan spake a verye plaine parable, till it was particularlye applyed to him. Seeing then there is in our nature such corruption, such blindnesse, such slouthfulnesse, and also forgetfulnes: what can be more necessarye for the curing of these so great diseases, then the continual and dayly preaching of the worde.

Besides all this, it hath bene an vsuall order in the Church of God vnder the lawe, by Christ and the Apostles, not onelye to reade, but also to expound and applye the Scriptures, and therefore the same order is to be obserued of vs. It is saide of the Le-
Nehe.8.8. uites, that they read in the booke of the lawe of God distinctly, and gaue the sence, and caused them to vnderstand the reading. Christ as we haue heard already,

already, continuallye preached and commaunded the same to his Apostles, who as they obeyed in themselues their maisters cõmandement, so they required it as a continuall and vsuall rule to bee obserued for euer, of all the ministers of God in his Church.

And most specially the Apostle in those Epistles which he wrote vnto Timothy and Titus, very largely and effectually vrgeth this matter. I referre you also vnto the 14. chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians: wherin so highly he commendeth the gift of Prophesyng, interpretation, or preaching, that he preferreth it before all other giftes, and accounteth it so necessary, that he woulde haue it continually obserued in the Church of God. 1.Cor.14.

Againe, Christ commaundeth vs, and we dayly pray for the enlarging of his Kingdome, whereas hee hath taught vs to say, *Thy kingdome come:* Now, the singular & excellent meanes to establishe the kingdome of Iesus

Christ, is, by the pure and effectuall preaching of the word, and therefore he saith in an other place, *Pray to the Lord of the harueſt, to ſend forth labourers into the harueſt.* And how can they pray with any sake conscience, for the enlarging & establishing of the kingdome of Christ, which by their ignoraunce and careleſnes, doe altogether hinder it? Furthermore, all and euery one of the names, which are giuen by the holy ghoſt to the miniſters, in the word of God, doe necessarily requyre at their handes preaching. They are called the light of the worlde, the salt of the earth: They are called Paſtors and sheepheardes: they are called husbandmen, Guides, Stewards & Meſsengers, beſides many other excellent titles giuen to them. Now, how can they be called lightes, which haue no light in them, which either are in ignoraunce and darkneſſe them-ſelues, or els hide their candle vnder a Buſhell: How can they be called the salt of the earth, which cannot or will not ſeason the vnſauoryе and ſinfull peo-

Math. 9. 38.

Math. 5. 13. Ezech. 34. 2. 1. Cor. 4. 1.

ple,

ple, with the heauenly and wholsome doctrine of eternall life: How can they be called Pastors and teachers, which do not feed, or haue no food at al to giue to the flock: How can they be called the Lordes Husbandmen, which haue no skill at all in tilling his ground, and sowing his seed: how can they be called Guides vnto other, which either know not the way them selues, or else will not vouchsafe to open and declare it to other: how can they be called stewardes, which haue no care of the houshold, which either can not or will not feede them? And how can they be called the Lordes messengers, which are not able to doe their message, or haue no care at all to do it. If the minister be a light to the people, of necessity he must needs goe and shine before them in knowledge and doctrine. If he bee the Salt, he must needes season. If he bee a Pastour or Sheephearde, he must needs feed. If he be a Husbandman, he muste needes haue a care of the lords husbandry. If he be a guide

he must needes shew the way. If he be a Stewarde, he must prouide for the houshold. If he be a messenger, he must be willing and able to doe his message: nay, I saye more, it standes for the Lordes glorye and credite, to haue such Pastors, and such husbandmen, such Stewardes & messengers, as haue wisedome and knowledge. The poore people of the country will not hire him to be a Sheepheard to their sheepe, whome they know to be ignorant and careless: and shall the Lord chose such to gouerne and guid his flocke? The Gentleman and the Yeoman, wil not hire any to be ouerseers of their husbandrie, except they know them to haue sufficient discretion and experience: and wil he think ye be content with simple, foolish, and rechlesse ouerseers of his so deare and precious a husbãdry? The noble man for his honors sake, wil seeke to haue such a one to be the Steward of his house as is trustie, wise, & of sufficiencie to guide and gouerne a whole household: and shall the Lorde be lesse

care-

carefull of his honour: shall he be cõtent with vnwise and vnfaythfull stewardes: The Prince wil haue a speciall care to send such to be his messengers and Ambassadors, as be most wise & faithfull, & are able discreetely and cunningly to doe their message: and shall the Lordes messengers bee without knowledge? What can bee more to the discredite and dishonor of his holye name? This argument I amplifie the more, because it is very playne and effectuall. Marke I beseech you wel, al these & other names giuen to vs in the holy scripture, doe require of euery minister of god, that he preach the worde. As wee haue a care to aunswere to our names, and a care of the glorye and credite of oure God: euen so let vs be carefull in doing this so necessarie a duetie. What shall I say more, the end and purpose of our calling & ministery requireth at our handes preaching. The Lorde hath ordained Pastors & teachers, for the gathering together of his saints, and to the edification of the bodye of

christ: seeing thē we are called to this ende, seeing we are ordained to this purpose, there is no remedy, we that are the ministers of God, must needs of necessity preach his worde. For a further proof & conclusion of this matter, I cal you to recorde, I appeale to your own cōsciences, which are now won to ỹ lord, which haue some measure of knowledge, which are called out of darknesse to light, from ignoraunce to knowledge: yee ỹ sometime haue been content with reading ministers, & quarter sermons, but now hunger and thirst for the word preached: I cal you I say, as witnesses in this cause, what cōfort you feel, what profite, what power in the effectuall preaching of the word: how careless how prophane, how ignoraunt, how leud you were before, notwithstāding the dayly and the ordinary readinges which diligently you had: what hath wrought in you ỹ measure of faith, ỹ heauenly knowledge which you now haue? What is it, that hath wrought in you such a sorrow of your former

life

life, suche a griefe & hatred of sin and superstition, both in your selues and others, suche an earnest zeale of the word, such a conscience and a care to reforme your selues and your householdes: What (I say) hath wrought these thinges in you: howe came you by them: What is it that hath so altered your mindes, deedes, and affections: Let your conscience bee witnesse to me in this matter. I am sure you will approoue that which I haue spoken, and acknowledge the profite, the power and necessitie of the word preached.

All & euery one of these argumeuts do prooue and confirm as I thinke, ỹ euery minister necessarily ought to preach, and otherwise, ỹ heis no minister approued of God. All & euery one of these, or most of thē do quite ouerthrow and condemne, all dumb, idle & careless ministers whatsoeuer. One day they shall know, what account he maketh of the soules of hys people: for seeing the word of the Lord, in so many places, requireth in a minister

preaching,

preaching, yea, diligent and carefull preaching: in what a miserable and damnable state doe these men stande.

1.Cor.9.16. The Apostle saith, *Woe be to me if I preach not the Gospell.* Well, it may be whatsoeuer I haue yet spoken will be granted, it is necessary that euery minister preach: but what shall all those be condemned which haue not such full measure of knowledge as other haue, which be not accounted & allowed for publique preachers? god forbid: I know there is difference in gifts, there was so amongst the Apostles, but they all sufficientlye preached. Amongst vs and such others as vse this place, and such like places, there is difference, euerye one of vs haue not the like measure: but for my part I speake as I thinke, our measure is small ynough, yet the Lord be thanked for that we haue, & giue vs grace to vse it to his glorye, & the benefit of his church. In my selfe, I professe and grant very small and weake measure, insufficiencie, and lacke of giftes, and the Lorde the searcher of

the

the hearts knoweth, that the consideration of this hath and doth make me to feare and tremble oftentimes, to sigh and lament, ỳ so great a charge, and so waighty a burthen is laid vpon me, so simple & weake a wretch.

To you that haue any measure of those gifts, which the Lord requireth in his ministers: to you (I say) quench not the spirite, vse the meanes to encrease your measure, if you be painefull, carefull, watchfull, and faithfull in your Ministerye, with a holye and pure affection, the Lord will blesse you. *To him that hath shal be giuen*, we cannot at the first come to perfection. Apollos a learned Doctor, feruent in the spirite, and mighty in the Scriptures, yet was he ignorant in some things, and receaued instructiõs from Aquila & Priscilla. Some haue more then others, some haue ten talentes, some fiue, and some but one, yet alwayes remember, and let it neuer slip out of your mindes, that ỳ slouthfull and vnprofitable seruaunt shall bee cast into vtter darkenesse, there shall

Mat. 25. 23.

Acts. 18. 26.

shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth. Against such I speake, which in deede neuer had anye one Talent, or any giftes of ministers, or hauing any, doe either abuse them, or at least doe not put them foorth to any profitable vse. Consider a little the state of our ministery. There bee some amongest vs sacrificing and Malling Priestes, full of manifest superstition and hipocrisie, and in trueth enemies to Christs religiō. Others there be altogither ignorant, vnlearned, very Idoles, they can doe what euen iust nothing. Others there be, which may haue some grounde of learning, but in deede they vtter verye little, neither is ỳ people bettered by them. Some are idle, some careleſſe, some altogether lewd and prophane: some ioyne liuing to liuing, and take more vpon them, then they can discharge, although it may bee they speake in one place, yet are they dumbe in an other. All these and suche like are worthy of blame, to be openly spoken against, because they openly commit

offence

offence. All these stand dayly in a miserable and damnable state without repentance. But my chiefe drift at this time in this part of my Text, is, to proove as you haue heard, that euerye Minister approoued of God must preache, that is, hee must feede the people, hee must cut the worde of God, hee must improoue, rebuke, exhort: hee must not simply or barely read, or heare the people say some catechisme, but he is to be able in some sufficient measure, to open & interpret the holy scripture, and apply them, & I hope that this is already prooued: onely I exhorte you to account the Lord wisest, to rest in his holye decrees, and allowe his owne order as best. Let vs not take vpon vs to appoynt him what hee shuld doo. Seeing he hath set downe preaching, as the most excellent, & ordinary meanes to saluation: let vs not say, ỹ readyng will serue the turne: Seeing that he requireth that his ministers be apt to teach, let vs not count them his ministers which neuer taught, nor euer 1.Tim.4.12

had

had any aptnesse in them. If hee may bee counted a lawfull minister and teacher, that onely readeth the ordinary Sermon, and sometime heareth a fewe Children to say a Catechisme without booke, as it is set downe before him, then may the Clearke also of the Towne be counted a minister, & teacher: then may euery husbandman, seruingman, nay, euery boye or child ẏ can do asmuch, be so counted. Let not some say for defence of ignorant ministers, ẏ if they doe ẏ which they can do, it will serue the turn: for in the building of an house, as there be som maister builders which bring timber and Stone, so other there be, which bring morter and fillings, and serue to a necessary vse, but let vs remember that euerye Minister in hys charge, is, or ought to bee a builder, yea a master builder. and if the chiefe builder bring nothing but fillinges, how shal ẏ Lords building in ẏ place goe forward? The Apostle in ẏ place which hath bene already twise alleaged, sayth, *that the Lord hath ordained*

the

the minister for the gathering together of his Saincts, & for the edification of the body of Christ, till we meete together in the vnitie of faith and knowledge of the son of God, vnto a perfect man, and vnto the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ. Eph.4.12.13 Oh these be no small thinges: these are no trifles, this is no vile, simple, and drudgery worke, no small measure, but verye great, weighty, high, and moste excellent. The holye Ghost in another place saith: *Leauing the doctrine of the beginning of Christ, let vs be led forward vnto perfection, not laying againe the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisme and laying on of handes, and of the resurrection from the dead, and of eternall iudgment.* Heb.6.1 Marke I beseech you these wordes: There be many people, yea and Ministers also, that are ignorant of the first rudimentes of Christ, that of repentaunce, of Baptisme, of the resurrection, of eternall iudgment, are able to say nothing to anye purpose: but yet let it be so, that some can doe

doe this: they can teach as they lay in some measure: they can Catechise, & lay the grounds of Religion, yet this will not serue the turn, there must be building after the foundation, there must be a leading to perfection. The Lorde in building the materiall Tabernacle, did choose men of singuler wisedome, and vnderstanding: and wil he be content, with euery drudge and bungler in the building and erecting of his spirituall Tabernacle? But herein chiefly, haue some gathered offence and grief, because I haue said in this place before, and also other where, that such ministers haue no right to administer the Sacramentes

This seemeth a straunge and hard doctrine: yea, some are not ashamed to count it erronious and heretical. If I woulde stand vppon the authoritie of men, I could alleadge for the confirmation of the very wordes whiche I haue spoken, ỳ iudgement of those which, by common consent of all true Christians are receiued and allowed,

as

as the best, moste learned, and moste pure diuines, that euer were since the time of the Apostles, but this I hope shal not need. For, if of necessitie euerie minister ought to preache: or if all the former argumentes wil serue to proone this: then also that other doctrine, how strange and absurd soeuer some count it: must, I say, needs, necessarily & consequently folow, that none ought of right, to deal with the Lordes sacraments, but his Ministers. Christ requireth of him that baptiseth, that he teach: saying, *Goe teache and baptise*: No teacher, no Baptiser: that whiche God hathe ioyned togither, let no man put asunder. Saincte *Paule* speaking of the Lordes supper: *As often*, sayth he, *as you shall eate this bread, and drinke this cupp, ye shewe the Lords death till he come.* If the people, at the receiuing of the Sacrament, ought so haue an effectual and thank full remembraunce, of the deathe of Christ: it must needes followe, that the minister is bounde, sufficiently to instruct them in ỳ same. If any wil

Matth. 28. 19

1. Cor. 11. 26.

say that this is donne by the dumbe minister in reading the words of the institution: he preacheth: hee sheweth and publisheth Jesus Christ crucified: so may I say, that he or any other doth the same, and that more effectually, if they doe but say their belief openly before the congregation, but we speake of a singular, of an effectual, of an excellent and liuely shewing of his death, which is by preaching. The Apostle speaking to the Galathians saith, *That Iesus Christ was described in their sight, and among them crucified.* His meaning is, that Christ was so liuely preached to thē, as his liuely image was sette before their eies, or els had bene crucified amongest them. This is the power of preaching, this is the dutie of the minister, plainly and effectually to describe & set forth the merite of Christ his passion, so that it may be seene as it were before the eyes.

Gala. 3. 1.

The first Minister of Baptisme, Iohn the Baptist, was a preacher, he ioyned Preaching and Baptisme together

Math. 3.

gether, and in him no doubt, the Lord would leaue to his Church an exãple and pattern, and a forme of the right miniſtration of the Sacramentes. Chriſt, although there were ſundrye cauſes why hee woulde not Baptiſe, yet hee miniſtred the Supper to hys Apoſtles, but Chriſt was a preacher, yea, he preached then of his death before the firſt miniſtration and inſtitution of that ſacrament, leauing vs an example to doe the like. Mark. 1.38. Math. 26.20

The Apoſtles miniſtred the Sacramentes, but they al preached, yea, the Euangeliſt *Luke* in the ſtory of *Actes*, ſetteth preaching alwayes before the miniſtration of the Sacramentes. *Iohn* the Baptiſt, Chriſt, the Apoſtles and Primatiue Church, are the beſt examples that I knowe, and beſt worthy to be followed. Acts. 2.38. Act. 8.12.38 Act 10.34. Acts. 20.7.

Conſider farther I beſeech you, the great inconueniences which followe in theſe places where the word is not preached, the people are ſtil in ignorãce and blindneſſe, and kept ſtill in their olde and popiſh errours, re-

ceiued from their forefathers, they know not the vse of the sacraments, or to what end they serue, they holde still their Papisticall transubstantiation: some saye, they receiue their maker: other saye, they neuer heard what a Sacrament meant, some say they doe it in a good intent, and yet they knowe not their owne intent: other saye they hope that they receaue it as others doe. Fewe make any conscience with knowledge, feare and reuerence to prepare them selues. The greatest cause of this, is lacke of preaching, and in deede howe can their great ignorance bee taken away? how can they olde superstitious errours bee effectually confuted, but by the continuall and pure preaching of the word? And is it not then most fit and conuenient, when the sacrament is to be ministred: but wee are so farre from hauing any vsuall preaching before the Sacrament, that there be many thousands, which neuer heard anye preaching at all of the Sacramentes in all their life:

they

they haue liued these 25. yeares in a Christian lande vnder the Gospell, & yet they haue profited no further: and if they shoulde liue still double and triple the same yeares, they shuld bee neuer a whit the better, except they had better ministers, *Woe bee to me if I preach not the Gospell.* Learne one thing further before I goe to the next part of my Text: if there depend a woe ouer the minister if he preache not: the same woe is also against the people if they heare not, and obey not the word preached: *Woe Chorazin, woe Bethsaida, woe Capernaum,* wo to these Countries, Cities, Townes and people, which neglect and contemne the word preached, it shall bee easier for the land of Sodome and Gomorrha in the day of iudgement, then for such a people. The same God, the same worde which requireth preachyng of the minister, requireth also hearing and obedience of the people. *Hee that is of God, heareth Gods worde, and therfore doe ye not heare it, because yee are not of God. My sheepe* (sayth Christ) *heare*

Math. 11. 21.

Iohn. 8.

heare my voyce. And to the true minister it is said, He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. And againe, Verily, verily, I say vnto you, if I send any, hee that receiueth him receiueth me: Wherefore wee ought diligently to giue heed to the things which we haue heard, least at any time we should let them slip. For if the worde spoken by aungels was stedfast, and euery transgression and disobedience receiued a iust recompence of reward: how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed vnto vs by thē that heard him, God bearing witnesse thereto, both with signes and wonders, & with diuers miracles, and gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his own will? Woe then vnto all Papistes, Infidels, Atheists, Hipocrites, ignorant and carnall men, for none of these in trueth do make account of the Gospell.

Ioh.10.27.

Luke.10.16.

Ioh.13.20.

Hc.2.1.2.3.4

The third part.

And nowe let vs come to the third part of our Text, wherin is set down what

what euery minister ought to preach namely, the Gospell. They are not bound to deliuer the counsels of men, the traditions of the fathers, the statutes of earthly Princes, or the authoritie of mortall men: but as they are the seruauntes of Iesus Christ, Prince of all Princes, so are they bound onely to preache his Gospell. The true Prophetes neuer spake of themselues to the people, but as they receiued warning from the Lorde. They hadde no authoritie to speake their own wordes, nor ỳ wordes of any mortall mã. The Apostles might not teach their own doctrine, but onely ỳ which they had receiued from theyr master, who enioyneth them to teach all thinges whatsoeuer hee had commanded them: *Go* (saith he) *and preach the Gospell.* The holy Apostle writing to the Corinthians, auoucheth that he receiued of the Lorde that, which he deliuered to thẽ. Wherby we may see al these teachers cõfuted, which stay vppon the authoritie of men, which adde or diminish anye thing from the

Ierem.1.

Ezech.3.

Math.28.20

Mark.16.15.

1.Cor.11.23

1.Cor.15.3.

Scriptures, which ioyne their owne fantasies and the traditions of men, with the holy, pure & perfect word of God. Woe be to those sonnes of vanities, for in deed they preach not the Gospell, they preach not Christ, but themselues: they deface and weaken the authoritie of the holy scriptures.

Psalme. 19. *The law of God is a perfect law, conuerting soules. The scripture is able to make the man of God absolute, & perfect to al*

2. Tim. 3. *good workes.* The Lorde sayth by hys

Iere. 23. 28. prophet: *Hee that hath a dreame, let him tell a dreame, and he that hath my word, let hym speake my word faythfully. And what is the chaffe to the wheat, saith the Lord? Is not my word euen lyke a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the stone?* Our Sauiour in the Gospell speaketh against such

Matth. 15. 3. teachers, saying, *In vayn they worship me, teaching the doctrine & precepts of men.* Let vs remember that which is spoken in the last Chapter of the Reuelation. *I protest vnto every man*

Reuc. 22. 18 *that heareth the prophesie of this book, if any man add vnto these things, God*

shall

shall adde vnto him the plagues, that are written in this booke. And if any man shall diminishe of the wordes of this prophesie, God shall take away his part out of the booke of life, and out of the holy city, and from these things which are written in this booke. Woe be to them which preach and yet preach not the Gospell. But that we maye know the better how the Gospell shoulde bee preached, let vs consider a litle what it is, and what it containeth. The Euangelistes call it the Gospell of the kingdome. Saint Paule accompteth it that, which was promised before by the Prophetes in the holye scriptures, concerning Jesus Christ our Lorde: And in the same Chapiter he sayth, *It is the power of GOD vnto saluation to euery one that beleeueth* Rom. 10.16 And in an other place he calleth it the worde and ministery of reconciliation. 2.Cor.5.8.

Saint Iohn calleth it the testimonie of Jesus Christ. From these and such like places maye be easilye gathered a full diffinition of the Gospel, Reue.1.2.

which

which I leane to your godly consideration: onely this I adde, that vnder the voyce of the Gospell, is comprehended the whole history of Iesus Christ in the flesh, and also the fruite and vse of the same history. As touching the first, namely the history of Christ, it is summarily comprehended vnder his passion and resurrection: the vse and ende of all is, that we should haue repentaunce and remission of sins in his name. And this doth Christ himselfe witnesse, when as he saide to his Apostles after his resurrection: *Thus it is written, & thus it behooued Christ to suffer, and to rise againe from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins shoulde be preached in his name, among all Nations* Luk. 24. 46.

To this agreeth the holy Apostle S. Peter, when as he saieth with other the Apostles, to the counsell and chiefe Priestes. *The God of our fathers hath raised vp Iesus, whom ye slew, & hanged on a tree. Him hath God lift vp with his right hand, to be a prince & a sauiour, to giue repentance vnto Israel and forgiue-* Act. 5. 30. 31.

nes

ues of sinnes. By this we may see how the Gospell must be preached, ỹ people must be taught what Christ hath done for thē. The whole storye of his incarnation, conception, byrth, sufferinges, Resurrection and Ascention: these thinges I saye muste be oftentimes and effectually preached to the people, as they are set downe by the holy Euangelistes and Apostles: but yet this is not inough to shew what Christ hath done, to rehearse the storye of his Incarnation, but also the minister must bee carefull to preach the vse, the ende and fruit of the same storie: which is, that the people maye repent, be tourned vnfainedlye vnto God, and so by faith made partakers of remission of sinnes through Jesus Christ. Repentance is a true turning to God, a chaunging of the outwarde and inwarde man, a dying to sin, a lining to righteousnes, and amendmēt of ỹ whole life: with this doctrine we must begin, this we must firste of all and chiefly vrge: this is that doctrine chieflye and moste of all preached by

the

the holy Prophets: This is the com-
Ierem.4.1. mon and vsuall voyce, *O Israel return*
Ezech 18.1. *to the Lord*. Iohn the Baptist the
Hose.14.1. Messenger, and also Iesus Christ his
Math.32. Maister, they cry both of them: *Re-*
Math.4.17. *pent for the kingdome of Heauen is at*
Rom.3.2. *hand*. The Apostles also euery where
exhort men to repentance, to amend-
ment of life, to mortification and re-
generation. This is an vsual doctrin
in all their Epistles. Now, they
can neuer truely repent which know
not the greatnesse of their sinnes and
the punnishment due to them. And
how shall they knowe this, except
Rom.7.7. their sinnes be reproued and laid o-
pen by preaching the lawe of God:
for by the lawe commeth the know-
ledge of sinne: so that the doctrine of
the lawe must not be seperated from
the preaching of the Gospel: for it is
a schoolmaster to bring vs to Christ.
This then is necessarily required of
euerye minister, freelye and boldlye
to reproue sinne in all estates and
degrees whatsoeuer. This is it that
Isai.58.1. the Lorde sayth to his Prophet. *Cry*

aloud,

aloud, spare not, lift vp thy voyce like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and to the house of Iacob their sinnes. Our sauiour Christ accounteth it as an office & duty of the holy Ghost, to reproue the world of sinne. And in deed there is no doctrin more necessarye for this age, wherein we liue, although few can away with it, but cry out against such as preach it. Iohn.16.8.

And as in other places, so in this place heretofore, I haue had proofe in this matter. For vpon iust occasiō noting ỳ certainty of Gods iudgemēts and condemnation of the wicked, I find then, that the impenitent & such as continue in their sinnes could not be saued, God could not forgiue them Hereupon some haue sayde and doe saye still of me, that I preached, that God coulde not forgiue sinnes. I sayde, and I saye againe, the Lorde is as true in his iustice, as in his mercye. Christ sayeth: *Except yee amende, yee shall all perishe.* And a- Luk.13.3.
gaine, *He that beleeueth not is damned.* Saint *Paul* saith, *no whoremonger, nor* Ephe.5.5.

adul-

adulterer, no vnrighteous or vncleane perſon ſhal inherite the kingdome of heauen This is as much as I ſayde, and in effect all that I ſayd, *Wo be to me if I preach not the Goſpell.*

Now Repentaunce is a part of the Goſpell, and that we maye repent, it is needfull to knowe our ſinnes, and as the ſins of all men muſt be reproued, and the iudgementes of GOD threatned againſt them, ſo eſpecially the ſinnes of publique perſonnes, as Magiſtrates and Miniſters: And if this in no caſe will be borne, but he that doth it, is ſtraight way blamed, alaſſe, what ſhall we do? If we ſpeake againſt the people, they are grieued, they ſaye we deale hardly with them, but looke not to our ſelues or to the higher powers. If we deale againſte Gentlemen and great men, we are hated, euill ſpoken of and abuſed: If wee ſpeake againſte the ignorant and careleſſe Miniſters, they are alſo offended, and ſaye we lacke diſcretion, charitie and modeſtye. Thus daungerous a thinge it is to preache

the

the Gospell, yea euen amongst them that glorye in the Gospell, so that as our state standeth, it may be sayde cleane contrarye to the saying of the Apostle in this place: Wo to them that preach the Gospell: and happye are they which preach not the Gospell, and they are counted wisest which rather holde their peace, or elsse meddle not with this parte of the Gospell. But the faithfull Minister, howsoeuer hee seeme to bee discouraged by suche wicked and vnthankefull dealinges of the worlde, yet hee is to comfort him selfe in the Lorde, and to feare God more then men. It is farre better to discharge our dueties faithfullye with a good Conscience, although we procure displeasure of men, then by leauing our duety vndone, or by doing the Lordes worke negligently and vnfaithfully, to procure the displeasure and heauy curse of God.

The holy Apostle hath spoken it, *Woe be to me if I preach not the gospel*; And to aunswere them somewhat

which

which blame vs for dealing so hardly and openly against the sinnes of the ministers: Is it not a part of discretion to reproue their sinnes which do most hurt, and are the causes of many other sinnes? This is that discretion which was vsed by the holy prophets euery where. They cry out against ỹ negligence of the Priestes, against their ignorance, carelesnesse, and leud conuersation. Amongst manye and infinite places, I referre you to that one place in the Prophet Malachie, who dealeth so hardly and particularly with the Priestes, as though all sinne had been in them. No doubt there were many sinnes amongst the people, and yet in all his prophesie, he seemeth to deale specially almost onlye against the Priestes, beeing in deed the causes and the authours of the sins of the people: yea, and these were such Priests, as were ordained of God, as were the successors of Aaron, and the tipes of Iesus Christ, and yet are so sharpely & publiquelye reproued by the Prophet. This discretion

crecion was vsed by Christ himselfe. How often times together doth hee pronounce woe against the Scribes & Pharises, calling them hypocrites, fooles, blinde guydes, serpentes, and generation of vipers: yea, how often times doth he sharply and openly rebuke his owne Apostles. *Perceive ye not yet* (sayth he) *neither understande? haue you your hearts yet hardened? haue you eyes and see not, haue ye eares and heare not, and do ye not remember?* Are not these my brethren, verye harde wordes, and such wordes as are vsed in the Scriptures against the very reprobate, & yet ỳ Lord Iesus vseth thē against his own apostles? In another place he reproueth thē for their vnbelief & harones of hart. How sharply doth ỳ apostle deal in all his epistles against false apostles? may vio he not reproue openly to his face, Peter the Apostle, and his fellow Minister, because he went not ỳ right way to the truth of the Gospel? So that it is not onely lawfull, but also necessary, that the sinnes of all estates, and specially

Math. 23. 13

Mark. 8. 17

Marc. 16. 14.

Gal. 2. 11.

of the greatest, and of the ministers be sharply and openly reproued. The holy apostle sayth. *Them that sinne openly rebuke openly, that the rest also maye feare.* But are not the sins of our ministers open? is not their ignorance apparant? is not their sluggishnesse & carelesnesse knowne? Doth not the common sort of people see it? And are not some of them fain to seek for instruction in other places? Do not many complayne of the lines of the ministers? Doe not they say commonly of them, that speake well and do euill? they bee as couetous as other, they haue neuer ynough. doe not the people see this and a great deale more? Are not these open offenders? Doth not duety, discretion and charitye bind the Preacher, if he will faythfully preach the gospel, to reproue them seuerally which giue cause of such offences? The Apostle vseth this vehemencie against himselfe, *Woe be to me if I preach not the Gospell:* which woe signifieth no light, small or easie matter, but the greeuous curse of god in this life,

life, and that fearefull condemnation in the life to come. Can they be too sharpely reproued, or can any speeches be too hard for them, which are ignorant and careleſſe in ſo great a light of the Goſpel after ſo long profeſſion which ſhould be guides to others, which haue ſo many excellent meanes, ſo great helps of knowledge offered to them by the Lorde, in theſe dayes which we liue in? Can they be too much or too often ſpoken againſt, which are ignorannt and will be ignorannt, which miſſlike thoſe that reproue them, which hate all that are not like them ſelues, which ſeeke to deface the painfull miniſter, yea, and ſtande in defence of their owne wickednesſe? Is not this to bind ſinn together with Cart-ropes? Sinne not twiſe, ſayth the wiſe man, for one ſin ſhall not be vnpuniſhed, and therefore take heede in time and amend, or elſe you periſhe: ſay what you will, thinke what you will, the Lorde is my witneſſe, I ſpeake the truth. I know I might bee better thought on to paſſe

uer such matters, but *Woe bee to me if I preach not the Gospell.* But it may be yet that some will saye, although this bee true that you haue spoken, yet all trueth is not to bee spoken at all tymes, in all places, and to all persons. The Minister must cutte the worde of God aright: Lyke a wise Stewarde, he must giue meat in due season. To these men I aunswere, that no necessarie trueth is to be hidden from the Church of God. And to speake more fully and directly to the purpose, as touchinge this matter of the necessitie of preachinge, of the miserable estate of them that be without it, and of suche Ministers as preache not: This matter I saye in my conscience, with wisedome and discretion, may bee spoken priuately or openly, whersoeuer, when soeuer, and before whomsoeuer: there is no place, but it hath need of this doctrin, no time but it requireth it, no persõs that it is not meete for. It is most fit and conuenient, most profitable and necessary for all estates and degrees,

of

of men, high and low, rich and poore, stronge and weake, learned and vnlearned, Princes, Nobles, Bishops, Preachers, dumbe Ministers and people, all haue neede of this Doctrine. They whiche haue knowledge, haue neede of it, that they maye knowe what they haue becne, that they maye see what they are, and bee thankefull to God. The ignorannt sorte haue neede of this doctrine, that they may feele their miserable estate, and so seeke for help and remedy. Princes, Nobles & gentlemen haue neede of this doctrine, and it is fit and necessarie to be preached before them, that knowing the necessity and worthines of preaching, they may be more carefull and liberall to maitaine it, and with better conscience bestow their liuinges. The learned Bishops haue neede of this doctrine, it is chiefly to be vrged before them, and they are continually to remember it, least they lay handes rashly on anie man, and so be partakers of other mens sinnes. The wise and

godly Preachers haue neede of thys doctrine, that they may be comforted and stirred vppe to greater zeale and trauaile: ignorant ministers haue neede of this doctrine, that they may see the damnable state they stand in: and so either amend if it will bee, or els giue themselues to some other calling, more fit and profitable for them. Let this doctrine be stayed: let men bee perswaded, as they are of themselues, that they are in good state without the word preached, that bare reading will serue the turne, the people ware careleſſe, and make no account of preaching. For they thinke they are well inough, and best of all without it, the people of God shall lacke their strengthning, their growing in fayth and knowledge: Princes and Gentlemen will make no account (as they do but litle already) how, or on whome they bestowe their liuinges. The preachers shall be nothing set by, the Idoll ministers encouraged: the famous vniuersities decayed and ouerthrowen: and in a

worde

wayy, the concealing, hindering, and withstanding this doctrine, is the next waye to cast downe all religion and learning: to bring Princes, Nobles, riche and poore, Ministers and people to hypocrisie and Atheisme. The Lorde therefore open the mouthes of his faythfull Ministers, to the daily urging of this so necessary a doctrine, that the prince may be strengthened, the Nobles stirred vp, all good ministers encouraged, the poore people instructed, ignorance and idolatry defaced, Religion and knowledge of God maye flowe thorowe the whole lande, that in the length, all ignorant and careless ministers maye be ashamed, and euery congregation, maye haue a faythfull, setted, and a resident Pastor. Thus wee haue scene at large, that whosoeuer will preache the Gospel faithfully and profitably, hee must first of all, and chiefly, urge the doctrine of repentaunce, which men can neuer haue, before they know their sinnes by the law of God, and therefore the sinnes of all

men muſt bee throughly and sharpely reproued, and chiefely the ſinnes of them which do moſt hurt, and giue greateſt occaſion of offence: as the ſin of the Magiſtrate and the miniſter. Now indeede to repentaunce, there muſt bee ioined alſo the doctrine of remiſſion of ſinnes through Chriſte. But this belongeth onely to them that repent, that are humbled that are caſt downe, that feele in their conſcience the torment of ſinne and condemnation, to ſuche it is to bee offered and preached, but it doth not appertaine to ignorant and ſenceleſſe men, to hipocrites, Infidels, Atheiſtes, Iuſticiaries, prophane and carnall men: theſe haue nothinge to doo with the doctrine of remiſſion of ſinnes.

And becauſe this age is altogether ſecure and careleſſe, full of iniquitie, of ignorance, diſobedience, vnthankfulneſſe, and contempt of the worde: it is moſt worthy of the doctrine of mercie, and remiſſion of ſinne, ſo muche the more worthy, as the benefites of

God

God in so great measure, and so long a time haue beene receiued without anye profite at all, so that in manye there is nothing still, but ignorannce and idolatrie, in others lesse zeal and religion, lesse Godlynesse of life then was in them many yeares agoe: and are these men worthy of mercie? Is remission of sinnes to bee preached and offered to them, naye the former doctrine of repentaunce, of the law of reprooving sinnes, of denouncing the iudgements of God agaynst al states and degrees. This part of the Gospel, I say, is most fit and needfull for such an age. And *woe bee to vs, if wee preach not the Gospell.*

Consider also, I beseeche you here, before we go to an end, the excellency and worthinesse of the preaching of the gospel. It is smal accounted of in the worlde, it is thought a vile and a simple office, it is contemned and dispised of the most part. But if these mē knew the sweet & excelent things contained and offered in the Gospell, which is ỹ matter of preaching, they

would

would also knowe the worthinesse of this so high a calling, and that the excellencie therof may more clearly appeare, let vs adde some further proof of this matter. And first remember, that this calling of the ministery & preaching of the worde, is no deuise of any mortall man, but the ordinance of the liuing God. It was he that ordeined *Moses* and the Prophets. *The Prophesie came not in the olde time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moued by the holy ghost.* The Lord Jesus himselfe, called appointed, & sent forth into the world his Apostles to preach the Gospell: It is ỹ holy Ghoste, which ordayneth faithfull ouerseers to feede the Church of God. It is Christe also at this day, which appointeth Pastors and teachers, for the gathering together of his saintes. It must needes be a worthy and an honorable calling, which hath so worthye authours, euen God him selfe, his sonne Christe Jesus, and the holie ghost: yea, and not only so, but as worthy haue exercised and

1.Pet.1

Mark.3.13

Act.20.

Ephes.4.11

practi-

practised this calling. The first preacher that euer was in the world was God him selfe, he preached to *Adam* in paradise that comfortable Gospel, *the seed of the woman shal destroy the serpents head*: after that he stirred vp *Noe* and *Lot*, *Moses* & the prophets, men of singular credite and authoritie. Nay what shall I speak of *Dauid* and *Solomon*. of the which, the one was a most victorious prince, and the other most welthie, yet they haue gotten more glory and credite, by their doctrines and instructions, then by all their riches & triumphes. These are gon and they are gone, but their good counsel, their Prouerbes, their Psalmes, and Preachings, remain and abide for euer for their euerlasting memorie, to the glory of God, and daily profite of his church. The first minister & preacher of the new testament, was Iohn the Baptist, of whom Christ our Sauiour saith, there was not a greater Prophet amongst womens children. Nay Christ himselfe was also a preacher of the Gospell, & witnesseth that he Genes. 3. Mark. 2

he came into the worlde euen to that purpose. After him, the Apostles also were sent into the world, euen to this end. Seeing then that God himselfe, & his sonn Christ Jesus, haue vouchsafed to preach the word: seeing so famous men as the Prophets and Apostles were ordained to this purpose, it must needes followe that the office of preaching is most famous, worthy and excellent. The worthinesse also of our calling most euidently appeareth in the worthinesse and price of the things committed vnto vs, which is the people of God, the Church of christ, his deare spouse, the very price of his bloud: If so great thinges be committed to vs: If the Lord put vs in trust with so deere and precious thinges, our calling must needes bee worthy and notable. Remember the notable effect and fruite of this calling, the winning of soules, the conuersion and saluation of the faithfull.

2. Cor. 1. *It pleased GOD by the foolishnesse of preaching, to saue them that beleeue.*

And further, the worthy matter of

prea-

preaching, is both here & other where set downe, namely the gospel, ỹ word of reconciliation, the word of grace, the good newes and glad tidinges of saluation, ỹ testimony of Iesus christ repentaunce and remission of sinnes. O that all men woulde consider this, that the glorye of Gods ministerye might appeare. If princes, noble mẽ, and Patrons, would remember this, they woulde haue more care & conscience in bestowing their liuings, and in defending the good minister. Pharaoh, king of Ægypt, in the time of famine, had such a care to prouide for his idolatrous priests, that he would not suffer them to sell their land, but gaue thẽ a sufficient ordinary to liue vpon. This example of an idolater in prouiding for idolatrous priestes shal condemn many christian gentlemen, which haue a great deal lesse care for true & christian ministers, which are so far from adding any thing of their owne to their maintenaunce, that rather vaylye by deceipt or violence, they take that from the Minister, which Gen. 47. 22.

which long ago was giuen by others. Let the Papist, the Atheist and hypocrite remember and consider the worthy calling of the minister, that laying aside all contempt, skoffing, disdaine & rayling, they might in heart, reuerence and honor the Lordes ordinance: & let all people remember this, that they may chierfully yeeld honor obedience, reuerence & maintenance to the faythfull Minister, remember that his calling is of the Lorde, that he hath to deal with your soules, that his purpose is to win you to the lord, that hee preacheth no lesse a thinge then the holy gospell of Jesus Christ. Now these things rightly cõsidered, is he not worthie to bee obeyed and maintained? *How beautiful are the feet of them, that bring the glad tydings of peace.* And read al which is gone before in the chapter, ỹ you may knowe that he which preacheth the Gospel, by right and equitie ought to liue of the Gospel. Let al good ministers remember this for their comforte, and instruction, that howsoeuer the worlde

thinke

thinke of them, they haue a worthye and high calling, and let them not faint, but make their ministery fully knowne, and ende their course, with ioy, and let all ignorant and careleſſe ministers, especially remember this doctrine, that so they maye eyther amend, or else come to shame and confusion. If the Lord be the authour of the ministery, the soules of the people are committed to vs: If the effect of our calling be to saue the soules of the people: if we haue to deale with the gospel of Christ: if so famous and notable men haue alwayes bene in this calling, what a man ought the minister to be: what care: what cõscience: what knowledge: what zeale and holye conuersation is required at his handes: you may see and witnes with me, I speake nothing to the defacing and discredite of the minister of God but rather to his great credite & glorie: his calling is most worthy & honourable, he is worthy of double honour, hee is to be obeyed and sufficiently maintained, he is the stewarde

of

of the lordes house, and the messenger of the lord of hostes. But as the faithful minister is to haue his credit and commendation: so the ignorant and careless sort, as we haue sufficiently already proued, are to be cast downe & defaced, because by thy ignorance, idlenesse and leud conuersation, they greatly dishonour the Lorde, & deface his glory. I conclude and ende with the holy Apostle: *I beseech you brethren, that you know them which labour among you, and are ouer you in the Lord, & admonish you, that you haue them in singular loue for their works sake:* by ỹ which place we see that such as labour not, admonish not, and worke not (such I saye) are not worthye of any loue or honor, but rather to be thrust out and banished, as vnprofitable members out of the church of God. The which the Lord of the haruest, graunt for his tender mercies, in Iesus Christ Amen.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM 11 Oc 86